

Mona Vakilifathi

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Research Interests

American political institutions, state politics, bureaucratic delegation, education governance, legal text analysis

Employment

Assistant Professor, Robert F. Wagner Graduate School of Public Service, New York University
(August 2017 - Present)

Researcher, Policy Analysis for California Education, Stanford University
(September 2010 - July 2011)

Research Analyst, Center for Education Policy Analysis, Stanford University
(September 2009 - May 2011)

Education

Ph.D. Political Science, University of California, San Diego (June 2017)

Dissertation: *From the Statehouse to the Schoolhouse: The Effect of State Legislative Institutions on Charter School Growth*

Dissertation Committee: Thad Kousser [Chair], Gary Jacobson, Kaare Strøm, Seth Hill, Julie Cullen, and David Plank

M.A. Political Science, University of California, San Diego (June 2013)

B.A. Political Science, University of California, San Diego (June 2009) [cum laude]

Peer-Reviewed Articles

“Constraining Bureaucrats Today Knowing You’ll Be Gone Tomorrow: The Effect of Legislative Term Limits on Statutory Discretion” Forthcoming, *Policy Studies Journal*.

★ APSA State Politics and Policy Section SPPQ Best Paper Award (2016)

Working Papers

“Setting Off the Fire Alarm: The Effect of Interest Group Strength and the Legislative Regulatory Veto on Regulatory Discretion”

“Constraining Local School Boards of Education to Give Charter Schools a Chance: The Negative Effect of Statutory Discretion on Charter School Growth”

“Strategic Delegation? How Legislators Respond to Electoral Uncertainty”

“The Effect of Decentralization on Educational Attainment” (with Ben Graham and Kaare Strøm)

“A Bias in Representation: How Local Communities with More Representatives Get More Discretionary Spending” (with Liesel Spangler)

“Does Judicial Selection Affect Judicial Performance? Evidence from a Natural Experiment” (with Thad Kousser)

Works in Progress

“How Do Legislators Assess Electoral Uncertainty?”

“Do Electorally Vulnerable Legislators Grant Less Statutory Discretion?”

“The Effect of Electoral Uncertainty on Number and Type of Charter School Authorizers”

“The Effect of Decentralization on Charter School Statutory Discretion and Charter School Growth”

Presentations

Invited Talks

- Duke University (2016)
- University of California, Santa Barbara (2017)

Conference Presentations

- American Political Science Association Annual Meeting (2015, 2017)
- Experiments in State Politics Conference (2015)
- Frontiers in Public Administration and Policy Implementation Conference (2017)
- Midwest Political Science Association Annual Meeting (2014, 2016)
- Political Institutions and Elite Behavior Experimental Approaches Conference (2016)
- Southern California Political Institutions Conference (2016)
- Southern Political Science Association Annual Meeting (2016)
- State Politics and Policy Conference (2015, 2016 [Poster], 2017 [Poster])
- The Society for Political Methodology Annual Meeting (2015 [Poster], 2016 [Poster])

Conference Discussant

- American Political Science Association Annual Meeting (2016)
- New Directions in Analyzing Text as Data Conference (2015)
- Southern California Law and Social Science Forum (2015, 2016)

Teaching

New York University

Policy Formation and Policy Analysis (Graduate Course) [Fall 2017]

Statistical Methods for Public, Nonprofit, and Health Management (Graduate Course) [Fall 2017]

University of California, San Diego

Introduction to American Politics (Undergraduate Course) [Summer 2015]

The Presidency (Undergraduate Course) [Summer 2016, Spring 2017]

Professional Experience

- Research Mentor, UCSD-STARS Summer Research Program (6/2016-8/2016)
- Doctoral Fellow, California Assembly Committee on Education (4/2014-6/2014)
- Admissions Interviewer, Education Pioneers (1/2014-3/2014)
- Doctoral Fellow, New York City Department of Education (7/2013-8/2013)
- Education Pioneers Fellow, New Jersey Department of Education (6/2012-8/2012)
- Legislative Intern, San Diego Unified School District (6/2009-8/2009)

Media

["The DeVos Confirmation Vote Suggests Trump Will Have a Tough Time Passing a School Voucher Law"](#)
The Washington Post (February 8, 2017)

Service

- Social Programming Co-Chair, UCSD Political Science Graduate Council (9/2012-6/2013; 9/2015-6/2016)
- Co-Chair, UCSD Women in Political Science (9/2013-6/2014)
- Graduate Representative, UC Systemwide Committee on Education Policy (9/2012-6/2013)
- Recruitment Co-Chair, UCSD Political Science Graduate Council (9/2011-6/2012)
- Classroom Volunteer, Santa Clara County Juvenile Hall (2/2011-4/2011)
- Advisory Leader, College Track East Palo Alto (9/2009-5/2010)

❖ **Referee:** American Politics Research, Journal of Politics, Legislative Studies Quarterly, State Politics and Policy Quarterly

Awards and Grants

- APSA Thomas M. Carsey Endowment for State Politics and Policy Research Travel Award (2017)
- Department Nominee, UCSD Barbara and Paul Saltman Excellent Teaching Award (2016, 2017)
- APSA State Politics and Policy Section SPPQ Best Paper Award (2016)
- NSF Conference Grant, The Society for Political Methodology Annual Meeting (2015, 2016)
- NSF Conference Grant, Visions in Methodology Annual Meeting (2016)
- UCSD Dean of Social Sciences Research Travel Award (2014, 2016)
- UCSD Sanford Lakoff Dissertation Grant (2014, 2015)
- UCSD Department of Political Science Teaching Assistant Excellence Award (2014)
- Education Pioneers Eastern Region Showcase Speaker (2012) [*Awarded to the Education Pioneers Fellow who "exemplifies the core values of Education Pioneers, who has had a meaningful impact on their partner organization, and whom their future work in the sector will transform education."*]
- Education Pioneers Graduate School Summer Fellowship (2012)
- UCSD Oceanids Service and Leadership Award (2009)
- UCSD Sixth College Commencement Speaker (2009)